

# Innovation Studies in ELT: The Review of the Literature

Noriko Suda

## Abstract

It has been a common understanding that once new language curriculum was adopted it was automatically implemented and eventually institutionalized in the system. Such assumption was proved to be wrong in voluminous literature in educational change. In the field of ELT, innovation studies began to grow rapidly to show how to manage implementation process is equally important as what to teach in language classroom. The purpose of this paper is to give a full review of the literature in ELT innovations. First, theoretical frameworks which are often applied in the innovation studies are introduced. Second, innovation studies in both ESL and EFL contexts are reviewed. Third, literature on teacher development is introduced followed by conceptualization on management of innovation. Some suggestions to further research are proposed in the end.

## Introduction

In applied linguistics, the 1970s and the 1980s were the decades roughly coincided with the development of communicative approach which promoted many language teaching innovations. Applied linguists and language teachers focused on methods and syllabus design and believed that what was carefully researched and planned would be put into effect. However, from the late 1980s, they began to recognize that language curriculum development was no longer made up only of methods and syllabus but a mosaic of policy, planning, implementation, assessment and evaluation, and management (Brindley, 1990). Soon, the ELT literature (Richards, 1984; White, 1988; Kennedy, 1988; Henrichsen, 1989) started to highlight the complex phenomenon of change process and the difficulty of implementing language projects.

One of the earliest discussions on issues of implementation is made by Richards (1984). He claims that there are some instructional procedures compatible with particular syllabus models, which makes implementation easier (p.11). For example, a notional-functional syllabus (Wilkins, 1976) is often implemented via "communicative" approach, and it would be logically inconsistent if it is implemented through, say, Silent Way procedure (Gattegno, 1976). He argues the reasons for adopting a method depend on the *form* that the method takes (my emphasis). If the method is available in the form of materials such as textbooks and/or audio-visuels, consequently it has a higher adoption and survival rate than those which do not. Audiolingual and communicative methods are widely known for this reason.

The literature started to grow combining many aspects of the educational change literature and from other related fields. Those aspects include: diffusion-of-innovation perspective (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971; Rogers, 2003); social change strategies (Chin and Benne, 1969); curriculum development models (Havelock, 1971); characteristics of change process (Fullan, 2001); and school culture (Sarason, 1971). Furthermore, the literature includes complexity of socio-cultural contexts in foreign settings (Penner, 1995; Hui, 1997), and problems of innovation ownership (Kennedy, 1988; Markee, 1997).

I have gathered that the current ELT change literature can be categorized into three kinds. The first one is the innovations of curriculum reform in ESL and EFL contexts. Those studies focused on *how* innovations were implemented. The second kind focuses on teacher training and teacher development. The third is categorized as the management of change in language teaching context. The following breakdown will help categorize the major studies in the literature.

- I. A. Curriculum reform in the ESL contexts (Nunan, 1989; Brindley and Hood, 1990; Stoller, 1994)
- B. Curriculum reform in the EFL contexts (Henrichsen, 1989; Beretta, 1990; Markee, 1993, 1997; Goh, 1999; Karavas-Doukas, 1995; Penner, 1995; Hui, 1997)
- II. Focus on teacher training and teacher development (Kennedy, 1987; Widdowson, 1993)
- III. Focus on program management (Kennedy, 1988; Holliday, 1992)

The ELT change literature owes much of its development to the educational change literature, for many of the important notions on change were directly imported to this field. However, because the field is more narrowed, the definitions of the key terms, *innovation* and *change* though used interchangeably have become slightly different among the language teaching specialists. Markee (1993) defines innovation in language teaching as "proposals for qualitative change in pedagogical materials, approaches, and values that are perceived as new by individuals who comprise a formal (language) education system" (p. 231). He stresses the notion of *systemic* context of innovations is important for language teaching contexts (my emphasis). Since individual does not have freedom to innovate, Markee suggests that the relationship between individuals and systems must be taken into account when defining innovation.

Delano and his associates (1994) define innovation more narrowly for the ESL context:

An innovation in a second language teaching program is an informed change in an underlying philosophy of language teaching/learning, brought about by direct experience, research findings, or other means, resulting in an adaptation of pedagogic practices such that instruction is better able to promote language learning. (p. 489)

There is an underlying assumption that language programs are by all means based on the

research and development in which Second Language Acquisition plays an influential role. It is on this ground that many change studies in ELT are conducted and analyzed.

## **I. Theoretical framework**

Theoretical frameworks that are often applied in the ELT change literature are: 1) diffusion-of-innovation approach (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971; Rogers, 2003); and 2) social change strategies (Chin and Benne, 1969) often combined with curriculum development models (Havelock, 1971).

### **1. Diffusion-of-innovation approach**

Researchers in ELT (White, 1988; Kennedy, 1988; Henrichsen, 1989; Beretta, 1990; Markee, 1993; Stoller, 1994) find a “diffusion-of-innovation” (Rogers, 2003) perspective useful because it provides curriculum specialists, material writers, administrators and teachers with a coherent set of guiding principles for the development and implementation of ELT innovations. It also gives a unified framework to evaluate the extent to which these innovations have actually been implemented.

Applying diffusion-of-innovation approach promotes finding of perceived attributes of innovation which has been a popular trend in the educational change literature (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971; Zaltman and Duncan, 1977; Rogers, 2003). The most well-known attributes affecting the course of innovation were introduced by Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) in which they based on the conclusions of more than 1500 empirical and non-empirical studies. They are: *relative advantage* (the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being better than the idea it supersedes), *compatibility* (the degree to which an innovation is perceived as consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of the receivers), *complexity* (the degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and use), *trialability* (the degree to which an innovation can be experimented with on a limited basis), and *observability* (the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others). The use of attributes and innovation variables become indispensable in determining the success of implementation in ELT innovation studies. Since diffusionist perspective adopts technical and research development phases, *how* change is implemented using *what* kind of strategy becomes an important issue. The following are the preferred strategies and models frequently applied to innovations in English language teaching context.

### **2. Strategies for effecting change**

Independent from the developments in the processes of educational change (Rogers, 2003; Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971; Sarason, 1971; Lortie, 1975; Goodlad, 1984; Hargreaves, 1994; Fullan, 2001), a different line of literature grew in which social scientists involved in studying the influences of changes in work, community and family. Chin and Benne (1969)

conceptualized general strategies and procedures for effecting change. They discussed the change process as having three main strategies: empirical-rational, normative-re-educative and power-coercive.

1) Empirical-rational

This is most frequently used in the Western part of the world and is based on two assumptions (Chin and Benne, 1969). One is that people are rational, and the other is that people will follow their rational self-interest once this is revealed to them. Because of human being's innate rationality and motivation, it is assumed that those concerned will adopt the proposed change if it can be rationally justified and if they will gain by the change. The underlying assumption that people are rational in this strategy has met considerable disputes among the scholars. Fullan (2001) notes that social world can be altered by logical argument is an irrational thinking of reformers. What is rational to one person depends greatly on what subjective reality that person lives in.

2) Normative-re-educative

It assumes that people are seen as inherently active, in quest of impulse and need satisfaction. As rational and intelligent beings, people must participate in their own re-education, which involves normative as well as cognitive and perceptual changes (White, 1988). Since it involves alteration in attitudes, values, skills and significant relationships, it will involve changes in teachers' practices as well as their own theory of teaching. Normative-re-educative is welcomed when there is a need to make participants unlearn the old habits and thinking, and learn the new ways. According to Nicholls (1983), when innovation applies this strategy, it is the most lasting and the most self-sustaining forms but it will be time-consuming and difficult because it requires knowledge and skills that might not be present in all schools.

3) Power-coercive

With this strategy, innovation is characterized by exercising of the power to alter the existing situation. Its emphasis lies on political and economic, and to some extent moral sanctions in the exercise of power. The role of power source itself is sufficient enough reason to mandate change. It is commonly used in changing educational policy through government level legislation. It has failings from individual point of view because it neglects the human side of the change. Participants may become passive or hostile towards the innovation which most likely ends in the short-term implementation.

**3. Change models for curriculum implementation**

During the 1960s, when so many educational revolutions ended in failures in the United

States, Havelock (1971) finds that understanding of dissemination and utilization is crucial to the success of change. Based on several hundred studies from a number of fields including education, medicine, agriculture, industrial technology, and so forth, he developed three models of orientations which are used to describe utilization process. They are the Research, Development and Dissemination (RD & D) Model, the Social Interaction Model, and the Problem-solving Model (Havelock, 1971).

#### 1) The RD & D (Research, Development and Dissemination) Model

In this model, Havelock (1971) names five underlying assumptions. First, the evolution and application of innovation should be a rational sequence which must include research, development and packaging before the mass dissemination takes place. Second, planning has to occur over a long time span. Third, it assumes there has to be a division and coordination of labor to match with the rational sequence and planning. Fourth, it is assumed that users are passive but rational consumers who accept the innovation if it offered. Lastly, it assumes that initial development cost will be high in order to produce long-term benefits.

The RD & D model has been regarded as a successful basis for development in such fields as agricultural innovation and the adoption of new industrial processes (White, 1988). The model attracted the attention of educators and curriculum reformers in the United States while there were so many implementation failures were reported and gradually the waves spread to Europe, Australia, and eventually to Asia. It is a model devoted to the production of materials or the development of new methods which are packaged and disseminated to the public. Therefore in many countries where curriculum decisions are taken centrally, published materials like textbooks sponsored by the ministry of education are distributed throughout the system.

The RD & D has some limitations. First, the model is essentially linear in sequence but in reality, each section is more interactive in an educational setting. While Fullan (2001) conceptualizes change as multi-dimensional and interactive process, the RD & D still focuses on dissemination rather than institutionalization. Second, as White criticizes (1988), it lacks of what Rogers calls *homophily* between change agents and users. *Homophily*, is described by Rogers as "the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs, education, socioeconomic status, and the like" (2003, p. 19). Rogers notes that when the relationship between those participants is *heterophily*, that is, "the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are different in certain attributes" (p. 19), the diffusion will not be successful. In language teaching situation, if change agent who often is associated with the authority, he or she has heterophilous relationship with the teachers thus the implementation may be difficult. Finally, the model is over-idealized and it fails to consider the real-world obstacles to change. Henrichsen severely criticizes on this

point that "it is incapable of explaining many failures in implementation efforts" (1989, p. 66).

## 2) The Social Interaction Model

The model demonstrates a pattern by which innovations diffuse to the client-users through a maze of social and professional networks (Havelock, 1971). Here, individual user or adopter belongs to a network of social relations which largely influence his or her adopter behavior. An example is the implementation of English National Curriculum in the UK in which teachers from individual schools were sent to specialist teacher training courses to acquire the new knowledge and then brought it back to their own schools (Lamie, 2005). The acquired knowledge then became diffused to the rest of the people through the network mechanism designed in the Havelock model. From one network, the knowledge spreads through other networks until it disseminated to all schools.

## 3) The Problem-solving Model

According to Havelock (1971), this is the most favored approach among the educational practitioners. Its orientation lies in an assumption that innovation is a part of problem-solving process taking place inside the user or client system. The model begins with a need which is articulated by the client-user. Next, the need is translated to a problem statement and diagnosis. Based on the problem statement, client-user conducts a meaningful search and retrieval ideas and information which can be used in formulating or selecting the innovation. In this model, the role of change agent will not be as influential as in other models and that it will remain at a collaborative stance. One of the reasons that this model is favored among the educators is that because it is self-initiated, it can elicit strong commitment of users and that innovation may be institutionalized for a long-term. Also, it emphasizes bottom-up rather than top-down approach and it fits in with the contemporary thinking on the importance of school-based development.

## 4) Center-periphery model

This model for the dissemination of innovation is proposed by Schon (1973) who based his researches on diffusion in agriculture, medicine and industry. It rests on three basic elements: the innovation to be diffused exists, fully realized in its essentials, prior to its diffusion; diffusion is the movement of an innovation from a center out to its ultimate users; and directed diffusion is a centrally managed process of dissemination, training, and provision of resources and incentives (p. 81).

It is a model often seen in a centralized education system in countries like France and Japan (Markee, 1997). There is a large power distance between the center (the innovators) and the periphery (the users) with a possibility of unequal economic and political relationship.

Markee (1997, p. 63) claims that in such model, the power to promote educational change rests with a small number of ministry of education officials who are at the center of decision-making process. In contrast, teachers are on the periphery and they merely implement the decisions that are mandated to them.

#### 4. Strategies and models combined

Those strategies and the models described above can be combined and have been used, most unconsciously, by developers of various language teaching innovations (Markee, 1993).

The dominant change strategy for RD & D model is power-coercive (Lamie, 2005). Innovation is focused on the organization and the change is mandated where communication is one-way. It is often adopted at the national level curriculum development. This combination occurs when a ministry of education decides to develop and disseminate a new curriculum countrywide.

The advantages of RD & D model with power-coercive strategy are that they are based on sound research and that training is funded for users. While it is easy to structure and control, it lacks school and individual ownership which could create high resistance quotient such as in Dutch and Malaysian ministries of education (Markee, 1993) and in the aid program at Sudan (Markee, 1997).

RD & D may also combine with empirical-rational strategy. Such case is found when the Council of Europe adopted notional-functional syllabus (Wilkins, 1976). When the experts laid out the theoretical parameters of this syllabus, material writers translated those parameters into pedagogically useful categories that were used to organize teaching materials (Markee, 1997), thus helped the diffusion of syllabus quickly. Some scholars strongly promote the idea that the degree of disseminating teaching materials such as textbooks holds an important key to the success of implementation (Miles, 1964; Richards, 1984; White, 1988).

According to Markee (1997), RD & D model of change is best suited to the development and diffusion of complex, technical innovations. It is not particularly well-suited to promoting changes in human behavior.

The Social Interaction model often takes rational-empirical strategy where relationships between innovators and users are interactive and their communication is two-way. It reaches to all levels of the education system and at the same time, it encourages ownership and attempts to involve the users more directly in the process of implementation. However, the combination of the model and the strategy assumes users to be rational and to belong in social network. Since the system is interlocked with multiple of networks, information may get lost before it reaches all users (Lamie, 2005).

The combination of the problem-solving model and normative-re-educative strategy is highly effective when teachers have enough knowledge about change that they can share the

same values and beliefs with peers. Nolan and Meister (2000) describe the process of building up of an interdisciplinary curriculum headed by a group of five teachers. Those teachers had much knowledge and skills to create an interdisciplinary curriculum among five different subjects. Because this combination assumes collaboration and promotes collegiality, it is easier to apply to small-scale change but will be extremely difficult for large, national level curriculum innovation.

Both Lamie (2005) and White (1988) argue that innovations identified by users will be more effectively and durably installed than those which are mandated from the top. Therefore they claim problem-solving model and a normative-re-educative approach to innovation will probably be the most successful combination in any curriculum reform.

White (1988) gives warning that strategies and models are both an idealization and do not necessarily portray what actually occurs in any given innovation process. However, these models can alert future curriculum innovators to help avoid some of the problems which may arise when a given strategy is adopted. He is well confirmed with the view of Sarason (1971), Fullan (2001) and of other researchers on school effectiveness that teachers and students are end users who are the key persons for a successful implementation. White's (1988) comment summarizes and dictates the course of language program implementation:

An educational organization is operated by the persons who are themselves the instruments of change. Without their willingness and participation, there will be no change. And, it might be added, without the participation of the pupils there will not be change, either. (p. 116)

I shall now turn to the studies on curriculum reforms in ESL and EFL contexts. The strategies and models which have been discussed are used for analysis regardless of the (ESL/EFL) contexts. There are of course many studies that focus on other aspects, such as differences in teaching styles, use of communicative textbooks and many more. All in all, the results of ELT change studies are replications of the findings in the change literature.

## **Ila. Curriculum reform in ESL context**

In researches taking on diffusion-of-innovation approach, certain attributes have been suggested as correlating with the rate and success of implementing and spreading of innovation. Stoller (1994) selected 13 attributes frequently appeared in the innovation literature to examine how they affected the implementation of 124 innovations in the intensive English programs in the United States. Based on the surveys, she analyzed the perceived attributes of innovations, and as a result of a factor analysis which provided a better summary of interrelationships among the 13 attributes, she grouped them into a three-factor model (p. 310):



Factor 1: Balanced divergence factor (6 salient loadings)

Factor 2: Dissatisfaction factor (2 salient loadings)

Factor 3: Viability factor (3 salient loadings)

The balanced divergence factor combined six attributes: *explicitness*, *complexity/difficulty*, *compatibility with past practices*, *visibility*, *flexibility*, and *originality*. These six in the literature are discussed as either positively or negatively related to adoption rate. Stoller analyzed that these six attributes work together and that adoption rate depend on the 'zone of innovation' (p. 314) or what she describes as a middle range value. When these six attributes are sufficiently present, favorable attitudes towards the innovation develop and result in support for the innovation. On the contrary, if those attributes are perceived to fall outside of the 'zone', then the innovation is perceived to be 'too cold' or 'too hot', eventually losing the potential support.

The two salient loadings in the dissatisfaction factor are *dissatisfaction with*, and *improvement over, past practices*. In Stoller's findings, these two were the least hindering attributes and she saw them as facilitating the implementation of an innovation to a large extent. The greater the perceived dissatisfaction with current practices, the more an innovation is favorably supported.

The third factor, the viability factor combines *practicality*, *feasibility*, and *usefulness*. Although these terms are defined distinctively in the literature (Henrichsen, 1989), Stoller's respondents made little distinction among the three. All of them were seen to have strong facilitating effect on the implementation of specific innovations.

The strength of her study lies in the actual testing of those perceived attributes in language teaching context. The finding of the 'zone' should give sufficient guideline to the future program organizers and teachers.

Although diffusion-of-innovation approach and social change strategies have been frequently used to analyze innovations in ELT, the influences of Sarason (1971) and Fullan (2001) have also become apparent in the literature. An example of this different line of studies can be found in an innovation study of National Curriculum Project (NCP) organized under the Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) in Australia.

AMEP is a federally funded program which provides English language instruction to adult immigrants and refugees from a very diverse range of social, educational and ethnic backgrounds. Some 300 English language teaching centers exist across the country and there are more than 1500 teachers employed (Brindley and Hood, 1990). From the late 1970s to the mid 1980s, AMEP made a drastic change from a centralized curriculum structure to decentralized individual programs. The innovation put teachers with the sole responsibility for designing their own curricula, and unfortunately, the program was discontinued. Nunan (1989) conducted a detailed ethnographic study to find the reasons of failure by surveying

and interviewing over 800 teachers. His findings summarized that the program lacked in: curriculum guideline or models; teachers' skills and experience in making individual curriculum; more administrative support; sufficient time for consultation and communication with colleagues; teaching materials and appropriate assessment procedures; and funding (p. 12). Furthermore, there was a diverse group of learners who comprise large class size which hindered teachers from gathering information on students' needs and also there was high teacher turnover.

Those results resemble very much the outcomes of implementation failure studies reported in the United States during the 1970s. What American studies found as obstacles to implementation in educational change—lack of clarity about goals and innovation (Fullan, 2001), lack of skills on teachers' part, lack of collaboration (Hargreaves, 1994), intensification time (Hargreaves, 1994), and lack of administrative support (Fullan, 2001)—appear as problems in implementation of ELT curriculum innovation.

The AMEP decided to launch National Curriculum Project (NCP) to help build guidelines for teachers. Following extensive data collection and analysis, a number of curriculum resource documents were made and later called the Curriculum Framework. Brindley and Hood (1990) studied how this Framework was implemented in six English centers they surveyed. In some centers, such documentation of course goals and objectives was regarded as additional demand on teachers' time. Some of them felt that there had been insufficient consultation on the rationale and implications of this document, therefore they showed strong resistance. In other centers, there were curriculum teachers who acted as agents, provided assistance in planning the courses. In such a case, the group of teachers who were involved often spent time together investigating their assessment practices, evaluating and adapting instruments. This collaboration brought forth a highly successful professional development and the program was rejuvenated.

On the basis of this study, Brindley and Hood (1990) formed some guiding principles in which some of them are recurrent conceptions in the change literature. Each of those guidelines is interrelated and all of them are necessary for a successful change to take place. Following is the summary of the guidelines.

- 1) Clarity of goals and need of the innovation must be addressed (Fullan, 2001). Innovation must be perceived as beneficial to the teachers.
- 2) Rational or logical argument alone cannot bring about change (Fullan, 2001). It cannot be expected that teachers will automatically implement the curriculum.
- 3) The culture of the educational institution must be taken into consideration (Sarason, 1971). Depending on the micropolitics of a given situation, change agent or curriculum developers need to apply appropriate strategies for implementation.
- 4) The concept of joint "ownership" is necessary to ensure the success of innovation

(Kennedy, 1988; Markee, 1997). However, the extent to which joint ownership is possible will depend on the management of the head of institution and the associated micropolitics. Thus, effective management is indispensable for innovation to be installed.

- 5) Change requires not only administrative and professional support (Fullan, 2001), but also the strong local advocate who is familiar with the resource. In addition, the institution must provide environment where teachers can interact and create collegiality (Hargreaves, 1994; Fullan, 2001).
- 6) Change has to be supported by ongoing professional development (Fullan, 2001). Brindley and Hood (1990) state if teachers are asked to change their classroom practices, "they need professional development activities which enable them at the same time to use an innovation and to work through the implications of the change with colleagues" (p. 244).

This study provides an evidence that implementation is affected by an interrelated and complex set of educational, social, political and personal factors, each of which may determine the success or otherwise of an innovation.

### **IIb. Curriculum reform in the EFL context**

Most of the research on curricular innovation originates in the United States, Canada, Britain and Australia. These countries have relatively decentralized traditions of educational management and the models and strategies of change often applied there reflect this general cultural orientation (Markee, 1997). Since majority of English language teaching occurs in English as a foreign language context, it is necessary to bear in mind that other cultures may prefer to implement change in a more centralized fashion. I shall begin with the pioneering work in the ELT change literature which at the same time is the only one published innovation study on Japanese ELT curriculum.

#### **The ELEC effort**

Despite the fact that Japanese schools have exerted tremendous amount of energy and time for improving students' English language skills since the post-war, results have been very small (Henrichsen, 1989). The rationale for the ELEC (English Language Exploratory Committee) was to restructure English teaching practices which until then were heavily focused on reading and translating. Henrichsen (1989) reviewed extensively the ELEC effort, a historical case study which took place in Japan from 1956 to 1968.

The ELEC first started its mission by organizing teacher training sessions with notable scholars from the United States and England. One of them was Charles Fries, the originator of the Oral Approach and the head of the Michigan English Language Institute (ELI). In contrast to the translation and reading work that Japanese were taught, Oral Approach focused on vocal and stressed automatic unconscious use of language. It claimed to be then

the most efficient, the most time-saving way to begin the study of English and was disseminated through Michigan ELI across the nation and over thirty countries around the world.

ELEC had three major goals: to compile efficient English textbooks; to sponsor in-service training seminars for teachers every summer; and to establish a permanent language institute (Henrichsen, 1989). The committee and the specialists worked vigorously to achieve those goals and to some extent, they succeeded.

Fries was very much aware of the fact that people would have different structuring of language according to their linguistic background they grew up with. As he claimed "a different set of teaching materials must be prepared for each linguistic background" (Henrichsen, 1989, p. 39), a corpus of materials was compiled and published as "The New Approach", a textbook made for junior high school English class. After severe text examination by the Ministry of Education, it circulated in about 130 junior high schools in Japan. Though it eventually discontinued, it influenced other textbooks. As for the English Language Institute, the least revolutionary of ELEC's goals, the number of enrollments declined and the grant to pay for expensive "foreign trainers" came to an end in 1962. There were the rise of other organizations competing against the institution and ELEC was losing its momentum. In 1968, ELEC became financially independent by reopening as an English language school and its profits subsidize the summer program for training teachers. It continues till today but without the initial power and the revolutionary purpose held in 1956.

Henrichsen specifies the paradigm of the innovation-decision process (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971) as the basis of his as the closest to the case of ELEC because it takes into account a variety of factors that affect the process of implementation. Most of the change models till then are "designed for a single-culture setting (usually the United States) and ignore many of the important socio-cultural factors that a comparative, cross-cultural perspective reveals" (Henrichsen, 1989, p. 78). However, he claims the paradigm is still inadequate to describe the process therefore he sets forth the most comprehensive set of attributes in his Hybrid Model. Using the model as a guideline, Henrichsen examines innovation from multiple perspectives and categorizes factors which either facilitate or hinder change into four sets of attributes (p. 80). Those are attributes: 1) within the innovation itself, 2) within the resource system, 3) within the intended-user system, and 4) inter-elemental system. Adding to the attributes defined in the paradigm (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971) and referring to Fullan and Pomfret's determinants of implementation (1977), Henrichsen gives a total of eleven attributes which are found within the innovation—*originality, complexity, explicitness, relative advantage, trialability, observability, status, practicality, flexibility/adaptability, primacy, and form*. He defines the first two as having possibility of negative attributes related to adoption while the rest are positively related.

Although the attributes of innovation have attracted much attention as being the key factors in innovation process (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971), Henrichsen maintains the process is multi-dimensional and that involves interacting elements among those attributes.

Henrichsen calls ELEC effort neither failure nor success. ELEC gave a tremendous impact to those teachers who were trained but the program did not reach institutionalization. In my opinion, it does however propose certain issues that are recurrent in subsequent change studies in ELT. First, because the ELEC was a foreign made program, the underlying assumptions about pedagogy might have been in conflict with that of Japanese. Second, because it targeted solely on teachers rather than schools as organization, the actual implementation of the method into the system must have been difficult. Administrators and school principals must take part in understanding the innovation so that they can have clear goal about change and give sufficient support (Fullan, 2001). Teachers alone cannot bring about change to schools. Although this project took place in Japan long before communicative approach prevailed in the field of ELT and that Henrichsen's findings are strictly based on his analysis and not on ethnographic research, the study deserves much credit for defining the possible problems in cross-cultural innovations.

#### **Anglo-Sudanese ELTO Project**

Diffusionist perspective in ELT innovation is also found in language aid programs. Markee (1997) provides an example of implementation failure in the Anglo-Sudanese ELTO (English Language Teaching Officers) project he had worked on. The study describes an attempt of the ODA, the main organization in implementing the program with the center-periphery model in which the "center" was Britain who sent the experts to the "periphery", Sudan. Those experts were unfamiliar with the cultural norms and the social-cultural contexts of the setting, so they lacked behind their Sudanese counterparts who had a far better intuitive understanding of the learning problems of students. Because the program was foreign made and controlled by the British, the Sudanese teachers lost the sense of program ownership. The consequence of this project has some important implications: that such foreign assisted language programs must involve management of innovations that are culturally appropriate in the given situation; and that it requires administrators and change agents special expertise and knowledge in how local culture and other constraints affect English instruction in the host country. The issue of ownership becomes an important attribute for language teaching innovations.

#### **Implementation of the Bangalore Project**

Ownership in the language curriculum has become an important issue in a number of change studies in ELT. An exemplary study is reported by Beretta (1990) on implementation of the Bangalore Project, or the Communicational Teaching Project (CTP). The project is a

large-scale innovation widely known for promoting task-based “procedural” syllabus (Prabhu, 1987). Beretta interviewed 16 Bangalore teachers to measure the degree of implementation by means of Levels of Use (Hall and Loucks, 1977). He reduced the original eight Levels of Use to three which are: 1) orientation; 2) routine; and 3) renewal (1990, p. 324). Each level indicates the depth of teachers’ awareness of innovation. As the level goes up, teachers become aware of the strength and weakness of the CTP. After interviewing on 16 Bangalore teachers, Beretta found overall implementation level for the teachers was clustered in the Levels 1 (Orientation) and 2 (Routine) which comprised 87% of the total (p. 325). He analyzed the difficulty of implementation lied in three factors. First, the project which was fundamentally based on communicative approach required the Bangalore teachers to be fluent in English. Second, the project ownership was questioned especially between regular teachers and non-regular teachers who were native speakers of English. Third, the fact that project made excessive demand caused intensification of time (Hargreaves, 1994) for teachers. In addition, because of those factors, teachers tended to revert to the structure-based approach which was more familiar to them.

Beretta’s implementation study poses one very important issue which is relevant to any EFL context. That is, in situations where non-natives teach language, program developers and administrators need to clarify what level of English and what kind of training are needed before fluency-based innovations are feasible. The requiring of teachers to be fluent speakers is an issue unique to language teaching. From this respect, implementation of language projects put higher demands on teachers than in curriculum reforms in other subjects.

### **Curriculum innovation in Malaysia**

The concept of communicative approach attracted attentions of ministries of education in many Asian countries during the 1990s and their language program soon began to apply the state-of-the-art methods. Goh (1999) studied implementation of the communicative syllabus in English language curriculum in Malaysia. This nationwide curriculum innovation process contained some typical features of the RD & D model. The innovation was introduced from the center which in this case was experts and the Malaysian government agencies, to periphery, the end users or teachers. The central agency had conducted in-depth research and planning on new syllabuses, the training materials, in-service teacher training procedures and new textbooks all of which were packaged and disseminated. The dissemination and adoption process of the new syllabus was put into effect through two strategies (Chin and Benne, 1969). Since the innovation was presented to the teachers not as a proposal but as a product of careful research and planning and a better alternative to the current curriculum, it was disseminated in a typical top-down manner with power-coercive strategy. However, empirical-rational strategy was applied during the teacher training courses in which teachers were given explanations on the advantages of the new English

syllabus. Combined with the inputs of the latest ELT developments, they were convinced that their professional image would be enhanced by adopting the syllabus.

Despite of the careful research and planning, the innovation had some problems. First, there were too many layers of disseminators in which information was diluted and distorted before it reached the end users. This hindered effective communication among the participants concerning the introduction of change. Second, teachers did not have a sense of ownership of the program. Because the retraining cost for teachers was high, there were many teachers who did not receive training at all. Third, teachers had to miss their own lessons in order to attend those training courses. Their students began to have discipline problems and they had to meet with parents' complaints.

During the mid-stage of implementation, the Malaysian Ministry of Education made a second attempt to ensure the curriculum innovation by introducing a school-based training method called the Package System. The authority is shifted from the state to principals and senior teachers of each school. This new method of diffusion helped to increase teacher uptakes in training, enhanced school ownership and accountability, promoted collegiality among teachers and reduced interruptions to classes that teachers were in charge of. However, Goh (1999, pp.12-13) reports there were still setbacks in implementing a new syllabus in the actual classrooms.

One of the major setbacks was additional workload on teachers. Since the new syllabus required teachers to create their own teaching materials, this was especially hard for teachers who used to rely on textbooks. The pair-work, group work and other student-centered activities, which are all characteristics of communicative language teaching, became burdens to teachers who had large number of students in their classes and who had no clear understanding of the underlying principles of the new approach. Even though the new Package System stressed the ownership of the program for teachers, many of them did not show interest in the new syllabus. Teachers felt they were merely passive receivers whose role is to accept the mandate. Such negative perceptions about the curriculum innovations are not new in large-scale reform distributed in center-periphery model. Goh (1999) also adds there was little follow-up or professional support after the training session. As Fullan (2001) states very clearly, the ongoing support and the professional development are indispensable to the success of implementation.

The problems that found in this innovation are probably common throughout large-scale, nationwide curriculum reforms. Because the change is initiated by the government agencies or alike, teachers perceive the innovation as mandate and feel they have no bargaining power to talk about what to teach and how to teach. Since the teachers are the key to success of implementation, such negative perception will damage the process of change.

## Implementation of CLT in China and Greece

Similar setbacks can be found in different cultural contexts. A study conducted by Penner (1995) introduces conflict that foreign and Chinese educators experienced during the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. This large pedagogical change brought forth the discrepancies in educational theory, roles of teachers and students, expectations, methods, material use and structural concerns such as space and time.

The Chinese view towards language learning is very different from that of communicative approach. They focus on memorization, repetition, habit formation which are conditions for the mastery of forms, and all these eventually lead to the understanding and creative use of language. The role of teachers is very much influenced by Confucian tradition that it is authoritative, therefore teachers should not be questioned or challenged. This inhibits students to be active participants, which is a tenet of communicative approach. In addition, the purpose of studying English in China is to pass an examination for higher educational opportunities. This is why teachers rely on grammatical texts rather than authentic materials such as radio broadcast, newspaper articles and real-life dialogue, etc. (Penner, 1995, p.10). Large class size and the structure of the classroom also inhibit communicative ways of teaching. Students' desks are usually bolted to the floor which made teachers difficult to conduct student-centered activities.

With such large discrepancies between the classroom cultures, Penner claims that Chinese teachers must develop a "Chinese Way" (p.12) to adapt to the new curriculum. This is relevant to Fullan's fidelity approach (2001) which promotes mutual adaptation between an innovation and the already existing program. Such case requires flexibility on the part of program developers and the users.

Penner's study shows the implementing a curriculum which is based on different cultural values and assumptions is extremely difficult. After all, the culture of classroom is based on the traditions and values that have long been at the core of that very culture. Unfortunately, Penner does not proceed any further in discussing what a new Chinese way is like or supposed to be. Further studies in using the fidelity approach in cross-cultural contexts to compensate with the new method will be awaited.

Another study on CLT in China was conducted by Hui (1997) who claims that the certain factors are constraints to the adoption. Those are: economy, administration, culture, population, and the teachers' academic ability. In China, teacher is an underpaid job that many teachers have second or even third job to help living. This takes away time from teachers to do class preparation as well as to learn about the new innovation. Administrative constraint is strong because it is the teachers who are evaluated and not on how much students learn. Administrators are not often experts of English and since their



power is strong, they often impose materials on teachers which may not conform to the goals of CLT. Chinese culture, as discussed in Penner (1995) is based on Confucian tradition. Students asking questions or engaging in group discussion could generate fear of losing face. Therefore oral communication exercise does not suit the traditional classroom culture. Since China has a very large English-learning population (Hui, 1997), shortage in teacher has been a serious problem. Furthermore, Hui stresses that teachers lack in proper knowledge of CLT. There are not enough opportunities for every teacher to systematically study linguistic theories and learn about the communicative activities.

Although Hui's study is not fully supported by empirical data, her mentioning of teachers as the key factor to implementation is significant as with other change studies. To up-grade teachers' academic ability, teacher training is needed not only in the methodology but also in the teachers' English proficiency.

There is another study in which the innovation failed due to the conflict in values and attitudes with those of communicative approach. Karvas-Doukas (1995) conducted an ethnographic research in various levels of schools in Greece and identified the following factors as responsible to the unsuccessful implementation of the innovation: quality and quantity of teacher training; teachers' attitudes towards the innovation; and teachers' judgements of feasibility and practicality of the innovation. Once again, those factors have already been identified in the literature of educational change (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Fullan, 2001; Brindley and Hood, 1990; Kennedy, 1988).

Karavas-Doukas' study is based on her classroom observations of 14 Greek teachers of English followed by questionnaires and subsequent interviews with the observed teachers. Her goal was to discover how those teachers used the textbooks with communicative approach and how they felt about the innovation as a whole. The findings were: 1) that the new textbook showed incompatibility with the teachers' teaching style which until then was grammar based; and 2) that there was a lack of training or support for teachers.

The four factors she had identified were interrelated and the result does not show which one played the most crucial role. However, she analyzed there had been two other crucial factors that seriously hindered the implementation of the innovation. One is that the classroom culture in Greek schools was basically teacher-centered and that the teachers were not trained to use communicative approach. For those teachers, learner-centered principle in English class was seen highly problematic and unfeasible (Karavas-Doukas, 1995, p. 64). The other factor affecting the implementation was the lack of communication with the curriculum developers, with the foreign language advisor, with teacher trainers and with other teachers. Karavas-Doukas claims "the teachers received no systematic and on-going teacher training (which is the most apparent and crucial means of communication in innovation projects) before and after implementation" (p. 65). As change brings in new

perspective in methods and teaching style and that it requires teachers to alter their views they have had, the first factor is perceived as a problem in many language innovations. The communication channel shown in the second factor has also been an issue in the major change studies (Rosenholtz, 1989; Hargreaves, 1994; Fullan, 2001) and its existence is a powerful determinant for the success of implementation.

### **III. Teacher Training and Teacher Development**

The literature in educational change has been emphasizing the importance of teacher training and development as a crucial factor for implementing a curriculum (Sarason, 1971, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Fullan, 2001). Such advocates also exist in the field of ELT and though small in number, they have voiced the importance and relevance to the success of implementation in language classrooms.

Kennedy (1987) attempted to demonstrate that certain principles of innovations can be usefully applied to teacher education programs. In order to propose a strategy that would best work for teacher training, he referred to the ESP teacher education in Tunisia in which he had played the role of outsider change agent. Because change was taking place in a small unit, he claimed that use of normative-re-educative strategy (Chin and Benne, 1969) with its emphasis on problem-solving model would suit best. He stressed that a strong cognitive component to such program is necessary to increase teachers' understanding and knowledge of methods and materials (Kennedy, 1987, p. 169).

Widdowson (1993) emphasizes the importance of teacher development in a more conceptual way. His discussion serves as core elements in the teacher education. Widdowson shares the view with other scholars from educational change (Lortie, 1975; Sarason, 1993; Fullan, 2001) that "the macro-level of educational policy depend for their effectiveness on the interpretation by teachers at a micro-level of pedagogic practice and their abilities to carry out the proposals" (Widdowson, 1993, p. 260). Because policy decisions have been made without taking such implications into account, teachers remained excluded from decision-making process. As in the previously reviewed change studies in ELT, curriculum, syllabus and materials are designed by experts in authority. Teachers are then called on to implement them in their classrooms. Widdowson warns that such center-periphery structure would make impossible for teachers to exercise their full potential in classrooms. Here, he stresses the importance of recognizing teachers' own attitudes and cognitions, and how these interact with influences from outside.

Lastly and perhaps the most important, Widdowson emphasizes teacher development needs to be client-centered. It is necessary for teacher trainers to recognize that "local contexts of language teaching, including the identity of the teacher, must be given primary focus in any proposal for pedagogic action in course design, teacher preparation, or whatever" (p. 271). The adequacy of in-service training for teachers is noted by Fullan (2001) and

elsewhere, but still there is a dearth of such study conducted in the field of ELT innovations.

#### IV. Management of Change in ELT

Separate from those innovation studies and teacher development issues above, some conceptualization on the management of change in language teaching was made by Kennedy (1988) and Holliday (1992).

Kennedy (1988) emphasizes that for an innovation to have positive outcome, the managing of a project requires not only the skills in the organization and administration of material resources but also "considerable expertise in the management of change" (p. 329). His claim is that "change is systemic" and "it takes place in an environment which consists of a number of interrelating systems" (1988, p. 331). His diagram shows multi-layered half circles which represent those interrelating subsystems. From the outer rings lie "cultural", "political", "administrative", "educational", "institutional" systems respectively and the inner most being the "classroom innovation" (p. 332). The systems are laid out in hierarchical order where the outer rings, the higher level systems successively influencing those below them. Thus, the cultural system is assumed to be the most powerful and it influences political and administrative structures which have direct impact on educational and institutional changes, and ultimately into the classrooms. What makes an innovation in one context successful and other in failure depends on cultures. Kennedy distinguishes cultures according to their degree of openness to change and their speed of change (p. 334). If outside change agent brings in a different rate with different concept of change, a clash may rise. Innovation is most likely to succeed in a more loosely-organized system, with high degree of openness to outside influences. In such circumstance, communications are informal and flexibility prevails.

Drawing examples from the several expatriate-oriented projects in ELT, Holliday (1992) sees many innovations ended in what he calls "tissue rejection" (p. 403). It is a metaphor describing an implanted organ (curriculum innovation) that does not fit into the host body (the institution) to which it is introduced. He states "tissue rejection" occurs due to the three main reasons: communication and status problems; 'real world' problems; and the lack of informal orders (pp. 405-407).

Communication and status problems occur when the implanted language centers or courses made by the expatriate-oriented project imports systems which do not comply with the needs of the host institution. Often times, lack of communication between the expatriates and the local parties hinder the process of implementation. The 'real world' problem occurs when the expatriates who are often curriculum developers fail to understand the real world of local students. Those students will likely to experience educational as well

as cultural shock when they are introduced to new foreign teaching and examination styles which bear little relationship to their previous learning experiences. This problem is related to the lack of understanding informal order of the host institution. Informal order refers to the backstage where there is an intangible network of personal relationships, shared knowledge and unwritten conventions (p. 407) which cannot be found in the formal order or the official view of the institution.

In order to collect such information which ELT project managers need in order to minimize tissue rejection, Holliday suggests a strategy called 'means analysis' (p. 411). The strategy is supposed to lead the expatriates to look deeply through observations and help them grasp appropriate information and eventually promote them to appropriate action. As Holliday claims, such device is necessary when there is a danger of cultural biases. Although his claims are based on a particular ELT program (expatriate-oriented project), they are true not only in ELT but in change literature as well.

## Conclusion

As the reviews show, successful implementation is a rare matter. Furthermore, compared to the literature in educational change, implementation of new language teaching method or syllabus seems more difficult than implementing of syllabus in other subject areas such as mathematics and science. This is largely due to the complex characteristics of language teaching which are often overlooked. Henrichsen (1989) explains in detail about this complexity:

Foreign language teaching is an educational specialty with some distinctive characteristics. Its objective is the building of communication skills that require the rapid and accurate use of a complex set of cognitive and motor skills. All these complexities must be managed by language users almost subconsciously, since truly communicate they must pay more attention to the message than medium. For this reason, foreign language teaching employs methods quite different from those used to teach most other subjects. (p. 5)

Markee (1997) calls language teaching as "a highly value-laden activity" (p. 13) because it promotes fundamental changes in ways people communicate. Kennedy (1988) emphasizes innovation per se demands people to change not just their behaviors but "the way they think about certain issues, which is a deeper and more complex change" (p. 329). These alterations in behaviors which are deep-seated attitudes and beliefs affect a number of social and psychological factors that are not such great concern in most content areas.

The mosaic of ELT innovation studies has become fairly clear now. However, there are still some missing areas which need to be explored in order to give more comprehensive picture. Although many studies confirm that teachers play the vital role in change, how

teachers are affected by social or psychological factors that accompanied by change is still not clear. Put it simply, how do the teachers perceive change and how do they learn to manage such change in language teaching? Such account on teachers' receptivity on change has been popular in the larger literature of educational change, but none has been found yet in the field of ELT. Also, many of those change studies focused on large-scale curriculum innovations and adult ESL. There is a need for more school-based research to find how school as an organization promotes or becomes a setback of an implementation. Furthermore, what is completely missing from the literature is the existence of parents and the community that surround school. Both parents and community are very influential and they can enhance innovations (Fullan, 2001) but these two have remained so far untouched. By revealing those realities of the participants including those of teachers will lead us to further understanding of ELT innovations as well as the ways to successfully implement them.

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(須田 紀子 本学元助教授)